

India. No Sikh representative has ever signed the Indian constitution.

Many of us in this House, from both parties, have been calling for an end to American aid to India until it respects basic human rights and for a free and fair vote on the political status of Punjab, as well as notes on the status of Kashmir, Nagaland, and all the nations living under Indian rule. This auspicious anniversary would be a good time to renew that call and renew our efforts to bring freedom, peace, and prosperity to all the people of South Asia.

I insert the Washington Post article in the RECORD.

[From the Washington Post, Apr. 11, 1999]

SIKHS PARADE AND PRAY FOR SEPARATE NATION

(By Caryle Murphy)

Chanting praises to their greatest guru and walking behind a giant model of their Golden Temple, several thousand Sikhs marched down Constitution Avenue yesterday to celebrate the 300th anniversary of their religion's most sacred event, the creation of the first community of Sikh believers.

Five bearded Sikh priests bearing long daggers and dressed in saffron-hued turbans, led the colorful Khalsa March '99 from the Lincoln Memorial to the Capitol. A float carried the Sikh scripture, Granth, which was covered by a silver canopy decorated with flowers.

The march, which drew many of the Washington area's 7,000 Sikhs and others from across the country, was mainly to honor Sikhism.

"I came to celebrate our religion and what it's given to humanity," said Permeil Dass, 24, of Cleveland, who works in a community computer center.

"Our religion is very modern," she added, noting that it opposes inequality between human beings, the worship of idols and use of intoxicants.

But yesterday's day-long event was as much political as religious, with speakers at a pre-parade rally calling for an independent Sikh nation—to be named Khalistan—in the northwest Indian state of Punjab, home of the Sikh religion. The Indian government opposes a separate Sikh state in Punjab.

"In the Sikh religion, religion and politics are inseparable," said Gurmit Singh Aulakh, head of the District-based Council of Khalistan, one of the groups sponsoring yesterday's event. "We are aware that without political power no religion can flourish."

Among the banners carried in the parade were ones that said, "To Save Sikhism, Sikhs Want-Khalistan" and "A Sikh Nation, On the Move."

In an interview, San Diego resident Harinder Singh indicated that nationalism, as much as religious devotion, had brought him to yesterday's event.

"This is the least we can do to have some political voice around the world," the 36-year-old software engineer said. The message he hoped to deliver, he added, was that "sooner or later [Khalistan] is going to happen."

On Friday, the Indian Embassy's Deputy Chief of Mission T.P. Sreenivasan, said celebrations of the Sikh religion are "something we heartily support."

As for political demands voiced at the parade, Sreenivasan added: "This is a free country. But that is not the purpose of the march."

In a 1984 crackdown on Sikh militants, Indian police raided their Golden Temple at

Amritsar. In retaliation, Sikh bodyguards killed Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi five months later.

Yesterday's event, which Aulakh estimated drew 25,000 Sikhs, commemorated the day in 1699 when the 10th and greatest Sikh teacher, Guru Gobind Singh, initiated Khalsa Panth, the "Brotherhood of the Pure."

Khalsa Panth is the community of those who commit themselves to the tenets of Sikhism. In creating Khalsa Panth, Gobind broadened authority within the religion and took the final step, Sikhs believe, in the centuries-long establishment of their religion, which began in the 1400s with the first Sikh teacher, Guru Nanak.

Before yesterday's march, the Sikhs gathered in front of the Lincoln Memorial, where many waved small U.S. flags and saffron-colored flags with the blue Sikh symbol of Khalsa. On state, musicians played Sikh songs on the harmonium and drums called "tabla."

Dressed in long, flowing tunics with matching pantaloons, women wound their way up a red carpet to kneel and kiss their holy scripture, dropping offerings of a dollar or two. Later, all stood in place with hands folded and heads bowed for a communal prayer. Then it was time to march.

IN HONOR OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER OF BAYONNE, NEW JERSEY, AND THEIR ANNUAL HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY OBSERVANCE

HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 13, 1999

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Jewish Community Center of Bayonne, New Jersey, on their annual Holocaust Remembrance Day Observance.

The Jewish Community Center, headed by co-chairmen Aaron and Michael Kessel, has organized a remarkable program designed to provide understanding about the horrors of the Holocaust through education; our most important and fundamental tool in promoting the truth about the Holocaust. Using the theme "In Darkness there is Light," the message is that even at one's lowest moment—when one is stricken with despair and sees no way out—even then, there is still hope; there is still possibility; there is still life.

From the eighth grade students who will be taking part in a special assembly program to the seventh grade students who will be meeting with teacher volunteers to the proclamation which will be given by the mayor of Bayonne and honorary chair of the event, Mr. Joseph Doria, this day of remembrance and recognition is an all-encompassing event. Supported by the city of Bayonne, the Bayonne Interfaith Clergy and the Jewish Community Center, the goal is to bring all members of the community together to learn and discuss the atrocities of not only the Holocaust but the repercussions of prejudice, discrimination, degradation—the driving force behind the Holocaust.

The highlight of the event, however, is sure to be from the guest speaker and Holocaust survivor, Mr. Fred Margolies. Mr. Margolies

fled from Germany to Holland following the "Kristalnacht." At only 11 years old, Mr. Margolies had to endure unimaginable pains in order to survive. Once arriving in the United States, Mr. Margolies made it a priority to not let his experiences go silenced. Rather, he was pro-active in many organizations, serving as former Vice President to the Long Island Committee for Soviet Jewry and to the Temple of Shalom in Westbury. Presently, Mr. Margolies serves on the New York State Holocaust Education and Jewish Advisory Committee of Nassau County and speaks extensively on college campuses, public and private schools, and community organizations.

For these tremendous contributions to New Jersey and their unwavering commitment to fighting discrimination, I am very happy to honor all of the individuals who have worked so diligently on this event. I salute and congratulate all of them on their extraordinary accomplishments to the Jewish Community.

OVER-TAXED CITIZENS

HON. RON PACKARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 13, 1999

Mr. PACKARD. Mr. Speaker, it is time we hear the cries of the American taxpayer and offer much needed tax relief to the citizens of this country. This week I am especially reminded of the many hardworking families in Southern California and across the country who foot the bill year after year for Washington's tax and spend mentality.

Every year, the federal government takes more and more tax dollars from America's families. Today the average American family pays more in local, state and federal taxes than for food, clothing, shelter and transportation combined. In fact, the Census Bureau recently reported that the average household pays \$9,445 in annual federal income taxes alone—twice that paid in 1985. Yet despite a projected surplus of \$4.9 trillion over the next 15 years, taxpayers will pay more than \$10 trillion in taxes to the federal government over the next five years and more than \$22 trillion over the next ten years!

Mr. Speaker, while the President fights to raise taxes, my Republican colleagues and I are struggling to lower them. I think the choice to lower taxes is an obvious one. We must keep hard-earned wages where they belong—in the pockets of those who earn them. We must stand up for the American taxpayer.

TRIBUTE TO ROD KUCHARICH OF COLORADO SPRINGS UTILITIES

HON. BOB SCHAFFER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 13, 1999

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Rod Kuharich of Colorado Springs Utilities. Mr. Kuharich has demonstrated an unparalleled commitment to power consumers and the State of Colorado.